DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 403 484 CE 073 503

TITLE	Career Development/Special Needs.
PUB DATE	96
NOTE	33p.; In: Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Conference Proceedings (Minneapolis, MN, February 29-March 3, 1996); see CE 073 480.
PUB TYPE	Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Blue Collar Occupations; *Career Development; Career Education; Economically Disadvantaged; *Employed Women; Employer Attitudes; Federal Legislation; Federal Programs; Goal Orientation; Guides; *Job Training; Labor Force Development; Managerial Occupations; Material Development; Minority Groups; *Older Adults; Participant Characteristics; *Participation; Program Improvement
IDENTIFIERS	Job Training Partnership Act 1982

ABSTRACT

This document contains four papers presented at a symposium on career development and special needs moderated by James M. Brown at the 1996 conference of the Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD). "Differential Rates of Employer Sponsored Job Training by Demographic Characteristics among Executives, Administrators, and Managers" (Marilynn N. Butler) reports a study of data from the January 1991 Current Population Survey that found females and nonwhites are less likely to receive training. "An Analysis of Reasons for Nonparticipation in Adult Education Programs from the Perspectives of Low-Literate Blue-Collar Male Workers in an Urban Workplace" (Deryl Davis-Harrison) discusses a study that found that high "work esteem" and low "academic esteem" variables conjointly persist as important determinants of nonparticipatory behavior. "Using Transformative Learning Principles to Improve Training Programs for the Economically Disadvantaged" (Germain D. Ludwig) describes development of a manual to assist Private Industry Councils and Service Delivery Area staffs in evaluating the educational components of Job Training Partnership Act training program proposals. "Supporting the Career Development of Older Employees: An HRD Point of View" (Bertien Rhebergen, Ida Wognum) reports a survey of a multinational chemical corporation that had an age-aware personnel policy yet still concentrated more on younger employees. Formal human resource development (HRD) activities are found to have little effect on the career development of older workers. Papers contain references. (YLB)

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ED 403 484

SYMPOSIUM
[22] CAREER DEVELOPMENT/SPECIAL NEEDS

Chair: James M. Brown, University of Minnesota

Differential Rates of Employer Sponsored Job Training by Demographic Characteristics among Executives, Administrators, and Managers
Marilynn N. Butler, Pennsylvania State University

An Analysis of Reasons for Nonparticipation in Adult Education Programs from the Perspectives of Low-literate Blue-collar Male Workers in an Urban Workplace
Deryl Davis-Harrison, Milwaukee Area Technical College

Using Transformative Learning Principles to Improve Training Programs for the Economically Disadvantaged
Germain D. Ludwig, Palm Beach Atlantic College

Supporting the Career Development of Older Employees: An HRD Point of View
Bertien Rhebergen, University of Twente
Ida (A.A.M.) Wognum, University of Twente

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February 29-March 3, 1996

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Differential Rates of Employer Sponsored Job Training by Demographic Characteristics Among Executives, Administrators, and Managers

Marilynn N. Butler
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This study uses data gathered from the January, 1991 Current Population Survey to examine the incidence and relative opportunity of employer sponsored job training by gender and race. Responses to job training sponsorship questions reveal that females and non-whites are less likely to receive employer sponsored training than are their male and white counterparts.

Job training goes hand-in-hand with productivity, quality, flexibility, and automation in the best performing firms with changes in productivity frequently attributed to investments in education and training (Bartel, 1993; Lynch, 1994; Veum, 1994). Job training can be examined by looking at its two main categories—qualifying training and skill improvement training. Qualifying training is the training workers need to acquire jobs. Skill improvement training is training needed for workers to retain their jobs or advance to higher positions. Although qualifying training and training taken to improve skills play different roles in the workplace, research suggests that both contribute to greater earnings (Eck, 1993). Given the importance of job training for the purposes of developing people for the work force, acquisition of this training becomes an important issue.

Research into the acquisition of training is limited because there is a lack of comprehensive data available (Veum, 1993). However, various avenues exist for workers to obtain job training. These avenues include acquisition through government programs such as JTPA, acquisition through the military, acquisition through union sponsored apprenticeships, acquisition through the worker's own sources such as an investment in a post-secondary school, and acquisition through their employer.

Evidence suggests that employer sponsored training not only reduces the probability and duration of worker unemployment, but also boosts employee productivity, reduces new-hire turnover, and ultimately offers benefits on both the employee level and the organizational level (Bartel, 1993; Knoke, 1995). The National Center on the Education Quality of the Work Force (1995) survey findings indicate that virtually *all* surveyed organizations say that they supply either formal or informal training for their workers. Eighty-one percent of these organizations claim that they provide or pay for various forms of training for their employees, with 57 % reporting that their formal training efforts have increased over the last three years. *Training's* 1994 Industry Report estimates that over $50 billion was spent by U.S. organizations last year on formal in-house training programs alone with around 47 million people receiving this training (Lee, 1994). Fifty-two percent of these recipients were in management and professional positions and 48 % were in other occupational classifications. Clearly, employers are making substantial contributions to job training. However, research suggests that white males are the most frequent recipients of employor sponsored training in the United States (Lee, 1994; Veum, 1993). Changes in the demographic makeup of the American work force has given cause to conduct a closer examination of this issue.

The appearance of the American work force has and will continue to change dramatically. *Workforce 2000* projects that by the year 2000, minorities, women, and immigrants will compose 85 % of the growth in the work force with the once dominant white male group representing approximately only 45% of the total work force (Thomas, 1991). Furthermore, four key trends that are reshaping the American work force include: (a) the work-force will grow slowly; (b) become older; (c) consist of more females; and (d) consist of more disadvantaged individuals (Johnston, 1987). Because of these trends, policy makers must begin to reconcile the conflicting needs of women, work and families, integrate Black and Hispanic workers into the economy, and improve the educational preparation and job training

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of all workers. These projections indicate drastic differences in the composition and needs of the work force we once knew and understood.

Clearly, job training and education play an important role in developing the skills, knowledge, positive attitudes, and motivation workers need to function effectively. The level of an employee's earnings, productivity, success, and advancement hinge on these key factors. For example, employers often choose to make training investments in those employees they believe will bring the organization the highest returns. With evidence showing that training has a positive effect on earnings and productivity, a disproportionate distribution of this type of training is disturbing. Is there an equitable distribution of employer sponsored training opportunities?

In this context, distributional equity will become an increasing concern. Distributional equity refers to the justice or fairness in the manner in which an economy's output is distributed among individuals. Distributional equity is sometimes expressed in terms of the distribution of income, of wealth, social welfare, or utility and is often associated with value judgments. In terms of a labor market definition, labor market discrimination is said to occur when personal characteristics of the worker that are unrelated to productivity become criteria for the valuation in the labor market (Ehrenberg & Smith, 1991). However, race and gender are currently the most prominent of all personal characteristics alleged to be *unrelated* to productivity. This study examines race and gender issues as they relate to the equitable distribution of job training opportunities. In other words, are these opportunities distributed in an equitable fashion?

Specifically, this study examines whether gender and race are related to the incidence of employer sponsored job training opportunities among adult respondents in the January, 1991 Current Population Survey by occupation. The research reported in this paper is a portion of a larger study in progress and focuses on one occupational grouping: executives, administrators, and managerial occupations. The larger study includes registered nurses, secretaries and clerical staff, and accountants and auditors.

Methods

Data are analyzed from the *Current Population Survey* (CPS), January, 1991 (ICPSR 9716). The CPS is the source of the official government statistics on employment and unemployment. The universe consists of the civilian non-institutionalized population of the United States living in households. The probability sample selected to represent the universe consists of approximately 57,000 households containing approximately 114,500 persons 15 years old and over.

The January 1991 collection provides data on labor force activity for the week prior to the survey and a supplement that includes data on skills and training that workers needed to obtain their current or last job, on-the-job training, skills used on the last job, and workers' perceptions about the adequacy of their skills. Comprehensive data are available on the employment status, occupation, and industry, and personal characteristics of persons aged 15 years and over. Also shown are personal characteristics such as age, gender, race, marital status, veteran status, household relationship, educational background, and Hispanic origin. Questions were asked of all persons 15 years of age or older living in households, who were members of the experienced labor force, whether they were employed or not. *The Job Training Supplement* portion of the interview was asked of all persons 15 years of age and older who were members of the experienced labor force. These respondents were either working or working and temporarily absent from their jobs.

A subset of the CPS probability sample was created on the basis of age, work force status, labor force status, detailed occupation classification, and participation in job training. Age classification is based on the age of the person at his/her last birthday. Full-time workers, or persons on full-time schedules, include persons working 35 hours or more, persons who worked 1-34 hours for non-economic reasons (e.g., illness) and usually work full-time, and persons with a job but not at work. Persons with employed status comprise (1) all civilians who, during the survey week, do any work at all as paid employees or in their own business or profession, or on their own farm, or who work 15 hours or more as unpaid workers on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the family (*Working*); and (2) all

those who have jobs but who are not working because of illness, bad weather, vacation, or labor management dispute, or because they are taking time off for personal reasons, whether or not they are seeking other jobs (*With Job, Not at Work*).

According to the U.S Department of Labor (1992), information on how workers develop the skills they need for their jobs is useful in career guidance and in planning education and training programs. The CPS Job Training Supplement asked individuals to identify the various types of training they required to obtain their current jobs as well as those used to improve their skills. Specifically, the supplement centered on two questions: "Did you need to specific skills or training to obtain your current or last job?" (*Qualifying Training*) and "Since you obtained your present (last) job, did you take any training to improve your skills?" (*Skills Improvement Training*). Persons who responded "yes" were asked to identify the source(s) of their training, the type of source or program, who paid for the training, how long it lasted, and whether respondents completed the program. Respondents who answered "yes" to each of the questions, "Did you need specific skills or training to obtain your current or last job?" and "Since you obtained your present (last) job, did you take any training to improve your skills?" were asked the sponsorship question, "Did your employer pay for *All, Half or More, Less Than Half*, or *None* of the training?"

Employer Sponsored Job Training. The BLS (1992) reports that employers are increasingly sponsoring qualifying training and have greatly enhanced formal company programs for skills improvement. More use of on-the-job training is predicted to increase into the next century (Dervarics, 1993). Over $5 billion per year is spent by employers on employees' tuition reimbursement (Matthes, 1993). Various forms of these tuition reimbursements exist (Allen, 1991; Barry, 1990; Houlden, 1992; Reid, 1992; Rinalla, & Kopecky, 1989). For example, some firms reimburse their employees tuition and book dollars per semester for skills improvement in an academic setting while others offer qualifying training tuition reimbursements and tuition incentives to attract new employees (Merrill, 1987; Reid, 1992; Roach, 1990).

Employer sponsored apprenticeship and internship programs are being successfully created and implemented in organizations across the country (Filipczak, 1994; Gunsch, 1993; Rogers, 1994; Rowley & Crist, 1995). These programs are designed to build job skills, create productive employees, attract younger employees, and decrease the turnover rate.

Executives, Administrators, and Managers. Executives, administrators and managers, at all levels of an organization, are frequently subjected to various forms of developmental training and educational experiences. For continued success and career maintenance, members of this occupational classification are typically required to participate in some form of qualifying training or skills improvement training (Thomas, 1988; Jomaoas, 1985). The most successful and largest US corporations spend in excess of $450 billion on training and development programs investing most of these funds in their executives, administrators and managers (Thomas, 1988). Most companies view training and continuing education as vital to the professionalism and career development of managers so as to prepare them for upward mobility and high performance (Margotta, 1994). For many, these experiences do lead to advancement, promotions, and salary increases.

In an examination of the relationship of race to managers' ratings of promotion potential, Landeau (1995) concludes that females are rated lower than males and Blacks and Asians are rated lower than whites. Ohlott (1994) contends that one reason so few women have been promoted to senior management positions, in this white male dominated occupation is that during their careers, they experience fewer developmental job opportunities. Is the same true for people of color? Since developmental job opportunities include job training experiences, this contention requires further examination.

The research reported in this study includes only those persons who were considered *Working,* and *With Job, Not at Work,* between the ages of 15 and 65 years old, employed in the private sector within the occupational classification of *Executives, Administrators, and Managers,* participated in some form of *Qualifying Training* and/or *Skill Improvement Training* programs, and responded, *All, Half or More, and Less than Half,* to the sponsorship question.

Variables

Incidence Rates and Relative Opportunity Rates. Three levels of incidence rates of employer sponsored job training events were calculated by the demographic characteristics of gender and race for persons whose qualifying training and skills improvement training were paid for by their employers. These sponsorship levels include (1) *All*; (2) *Half or More*; and (3) *Less than Half.* The relative opportunity ratio of receiving employer sponsored job training for each set of rates are presented.

Gender and Race. To capture the relationship between the demographic characteristics of gender and race and employer sponsored training events, two dummy variables were created. The gender variable, *MALE*, indicates whether a CPS respondent is male rather than female. *WHITE*, the race variable, distinguishes whether a respondent is White rather than Black, Hispanic, Asian, or other.

Analyses

Responses to the three sponsorship levels of the *Qualifying Training* and*Skill Training* questions were cross-tabulated by gender and race. Relative opportunity rates for males versus females were calculated by dividing the incidence rates for males by the incidence rates for females. Relative opportunity rates for whites versus non-whites were calculated by dividing the incidence rates for whites by the incidence rates for non-whites.

Findings

Table 1 shows the incidence and relative opportunity for Executives, Administrators, and Managers to receive employer sponsored job training for both *Qualifying Training* and *Skill Improvement Training* by gender and race. Incidence rates are reported per 1000 people.

Qualifying Training. For those who received employer sponsored qualifying training by gender, males and females received all of their training at the same rate. Nevertheless, males were one and one-half times more likely than females to receive half or more of their training sponsored by their employer but slightly less likely to have less than half of their training sponsored.

By race, whites were nearly one and one-half times more likely than non-whites to have all of their training sponsored but slightly less likely than non-whites to have half or more of their job training sponsored. However, non-whites were more likely to receive less than half of their qualifying training sponsored by their employer.

Skill Improvement Training. By gender, for those who received employer sponsored skill improvement training, males were more likely to receive all of their training and less than half of their training sponsored than did females. Yet, females were slightly more likely than males to have half or more of their job training sponsored.

By race, whites were nearly one and one-half times more likely to have all of their training employer sponsored than non-whites and three times more likely than non-whites to have half or more of their job training sponsored. They were, however, slightly less likely than non-whites to receive less than half of their training sponsored by their employer.

Discussion

The results of these data support the contention that whites and males are the most frequent recipients of employer sponsored job training opportunities in the United States, at least in one occupational classification: Executives, Administrators, and Managers. With the existing key trends that are reshaping the America work force, clearly in these occupations, employer sponsored job training opportunities for females and non-whites appear to be distributed inequitably.

Table 1
Incidence and Relative Opportunity of Employer All Sponsored, Half or More Sponsored, and Less Than Half Sponsored Qualifying Training and Skill Improvement Training for Executives, Administrators, and Managers by Gender and Race (n=13,081,654)

Employer Sponsorship and Demographics	Qualifying Training		Skills Improvement Training	
	Incidence Per 1000 People	Relative Opportunity	Incidence Per 1000 People	Relative Opportunity
		Gender		
All Sponsored	46	1.00	59	1.28
Male	46		64	
Female	46		50	
Half or More Sponsored	18	1.50	14	0.92
Male	21		13	
Female	14		14	
Less than Half Sponsored	19	0.90	9	1.25
Male	18		10	
Female	20		8	
		Race		
All Sponsored	46	1.42	59	1.36
White	47		60	
Not White	33		44	
Half or More Sponsored	18	0.58	14	3.00
White	19		15	
Not White	13		5	
Less than Half Sponsored	19	0.62	9	0.69
White	18		9	
Not White	29		13	

Source: Current Population Survey, January 1991: Job Training
Note: *n* for all *Males* = 7,743,645; *n* for all *Females* = 5,338,008; *n* for all *Whites* = 12, 018,088; *n* for all *Non-Whites* = 1,063,565

This study's outcome implies that females and non-whites receive less employer sponsored job training opportunities at lower rates than males and whites. If job training leads to increased productivity, career development, career advancement, and higher salaries (Bartel, 1993; Knoke, 1995; Landeau, 1995; Margotta, 1994; Ohlotte, 1994), these data

suggest that females and non-whites are shortchanged. Specifically, one assumption is that females and non-whites are not afforded the same opportunity to become as productive, nor do they receive the same opportunity to achieve career advancement, as do males and whites as executives, administrators, and managers.

Given these data for this occupational classification, how equitable is the distribution of employer sponsored job training opportunities in other occupational groups? In the larger portion of this study where employer sponsored job training opportunities are examined for Nurses, Secretaries and Clerical Staff, and Accountants and Auditors, it will be interesting to see if the outcome of this study is restricted to the occupational classification of Executives, Administrators, and Managers, or if females and non-whites receive similar treatment.

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An Analysis of Reasons for Nonparticipation in Adult Education Programs from the Perspectives of Low-literate Blue-Collar Male Workers in an Urban Workplace

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This study analyzed reasons for non-participation in adult education programs from the perspectives of thirteen low-literate blue collar male workers. Findings suggest that although low-literate, blue-collar male workers lack confidence in their "book learning" abilities, they are able to maintain their self- concepts by developing a high level of confidence in their work abilities. The resulting high "work esteem" and low "academic-esteem" variables, conjointly persist as important determinants of nonparticipatory behavior in organized adult education programs.

In the last few years, there has been increased interest by employers, educators, and policy makers, in the literacy levels of the adult population and the rate of participation in adult education programs in the United States. In particular, employers are concerned that their workforce will be under-skilled and ill-prepared for the technological advances of the future. These rapid economic, technological, and labor market changes have created an urgency for employers, requiring greater attention to skill deficiencies of those entering the workforce as well as those already employed.

The purpose of this research was to examine reasons why blue-collar male workers with low-literacy skills fail to participate in adult education programs in light of a heightened awareness of technological advances and increased job losses in the low-skills areas. Because existing literature and theories have focused primarily on correlating specific variables with participation, important information about eligible adult learners, and particularly "blue collar" workers, has been ignored. This study investigated the influences of lifeworld experiences on nonparticipation in adult education programs of 13 blue-collar male workers with low-literacy skills. Historical, cultural, social, and structural dimensions of their lives were explored for the purpose of finding reasons these men do not participate in adult education programs.

Review of the Literature

Much of the participation/nonparticipation research in the past has focused on the problems within the individual adult and has labeled him/her as being in need of treatment, rehabilitation, and remediation (Brookfield, 1986; Beder, 1991). Some studies (Cross, 1981; Darkenwald, 1980; Hayes, 1988; Johnstone & Rivera, 1965; Valentine, 1990) focus primarily on identifying barriers and deterrents inhibiting participation, while others focus on participation from the perspectives of potential learners (Fingeret, 1990); Ross-Gordon, 1991; Stalker-Costin, 1987) to find the meaning education has for the individual based on past schooling experiences. Still others view education participation from a social reproduction position (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Giroux, 1983; MacLeod, 1987; Weis, 1988), examining the structures in society that have served to negatively impact the opportunities of some and improve the advantages of others. Quigley (1987) uses resistance theory to explain education nonparticipation, and most recently, Cookson (1995) has employed a multi-disciplinary model to examine nonparticipation in adult education programs.

However, findings of this study suggest that none of these theories and models adequately capture the reasons some adults, particularly blue-collar male workers with low-literacy skills, choose not to participate in adult education programs. Because most of these

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researchers have examined nonparticipation by studying those already participating, nonparticipants are labeled as deficient, and in need of rehabilitation (Beder, 1991; Brookfield, 1986). Findings of the current research suggest the contrary. Although nonparticipants may lack basic skills, according to mainstream standards, they are proficient in hands-on and manual work skills, priding themselves in their abilities to excel in this area.

None of the research studies examine the lifeworld histories of nonparticipants in an effort to understand the context in which meanings attached to education are developed and participation behavior is shaped. However, this research is unique in that respect, providing a holistic view of individual workers' perceptions of education and what it means in the lives of individuals. Thus, clearer understandings of nonparticipation in education must be seen as grounded within the context of the lifeworld experiences of populations of interest, including psychosocial, sociocultural, and sociostructural influencers.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This research was analyzed from a dual perspective using phenomenology and symbolic interaction theories. This framework allowed the researcher to study individuals from their viewpoints, while considering the psychosocial, sociocultural and sociostructural elements that interplay to influence and shape their behaviors. Taken together, these variables provided a holistic picture of the life, educational, and work experiences of these 13 individuals and helped to bring about a fuller understanding of their perceptions of education within the context of their respective lives.

The theoretical framework used to interpret the data is multi-realmed and comprehensive. It is gestalt in its orientation, using psychological and sociological perspectives. From psychology, a phenomenological perspective allows for the examination of the influencing factors that impact the lifeworld of the individual while not denying the socio-structural influences. From sociology, symbolic interaction theory is used to understand the meanings life experiences have for the person in relation to his interpretation of situations or events. Symbolic interactionists focus on "how individuals make sense of their worlds and themselves" (Hess et al, 1982, p. 16), and behold symbols, the things to which we attach meaning, as the foundation of social life (Henslin, 1995). Based on this theory, each of us acts according to how we define situations, thus, our behavior depends on our subjective interpretation, or definition of reality (Henslin, 1995). Thus, reality is socially constructed, meaning that reality is defined from the perspective of the respondent within the context of the situation.

Both perspectives regard the dynamic interplay between the individual and his environment as important, while at the same time, "it is necessary to see the world through the eyes of the actor to reach a full understanding of the purpose of that person's acts" (Krathwahl, 1993, p. 323). Within this dual framework, the complexities of the individual adult and the dynamic relationships of the influencing factors can be better understood. Through the voices of the study participants, we can see how their individual experiences interface with powerful social and organizational forces that invade the environments in which they live and work (Seidman, 1991). This allows us to more fully understand the impact of the multiplicity of influencers and the study participants' subsequent behavior toward adult education participation. This further affirms the importance of studying individuals within their entire lifeworld context before behavior can be understood. From a sociological standpoint, socio-structural forces can be critically analyzed, while using psychological perspectives to understand the reasons for the individual's behavior. However, this framework calls for a multi-analytic process, where the perspectives are used in concert with one another and not as separate means of analysis. This framework encompasses the dynamism of complex entities that help shape the world and perspectives of the individuals under investigation and their behavior toward participation.

Methodology

Given the purpose of attempting to understand the meanings blue-collar urban male workers with low-literacy skills attach to education, in an effort to find reasons they are not participating in

adult education programs, this study was conducted using qualitative principles. Psycho-social, socio-cultural, and socio-structural factors emerged as variables that influence the attitudes and behaviors of the thirteen male study participants regarding adult education participation. Taken together, these variables provided a holistic picture of the life, educational, and work experiences of these individuals and helped to bring about a fuller understanding of their perceptions of education within the contexts of their respective lives.

Data collected through open-ended in-depth interviewing were organized into three areas based on a phenomenological interviewing technique: life history context, detail of experiences, and reflection on meanings. Major categories that emerged from the data included: educational and schooling experiences as youth, family and cultural influences, perceptions of education and work, and education in relation to work. Through subcategories of "missing something," teacher insensitivity, tracking and labeling, early responsibilities, race and class discrimination, "simple" aspirations and "hidden" opportunities, implicit details about the experiences of these men were illuminated. The inference of meanings based on the actions and behaviors revealed in the narratives of these thirteen individuals were analyzed. A dual theoretical framework, grounded in phenomenology and symbolic interaction, was used to interpret the data.

Life History Context Influences on Nonparticipation

In an attempt to wrest meaning from the individual and collective lives of 13 male blue-collar workers with low-literacy skills, it was necessary to examine their experiences with education rooted within the context of their everyday lives as youth. They grew up in different parts of the United States, during different time periods, and under different, yet similar circumstances. They share in common their socioeconomic class and their workplace affiliation. Although their experiences were different, in many ways, they were similarly grounded in the low educational attainment of their parents, socioeconomic class, their difficulties experienced in school, responsibilities expected of them at an early age, and their perceptions of education relative to work. Furthermore, these commonalties in their early home lives led these men to their present careers and to similar perceptions of education participation. By considering these experiences within the context of the past, a linkage is established for understanding the significance of their influences on present and future education nonparticipation.

In the lives of most of the study participants, academic success was not common at school, at home, or in their neighborhoods. Most of their parents, many of their siblings, and most of their neighbors did not complete high school, and they worked in blue-collar jobs, farmed, or were on welfare. With the exception of one study participant, their encounters with high school and college graduates were minimal outside of school. Although, their parents valued education and generally believed in the efficacy of schooling, the negative displays of its benefits in their lives contradicted any positive expectations they had. Without many examples to follow, or from which to model their own lives, authentic connections between effort and reward were difficult to find, resulting in their parents' hesitancy to "push" them to achieve, and in some cases, to complete their studies.

To further enhance these inclinations toward noncompletion, the schools which they attended acknowledged their low expectations by suppressing their academic needs and encouraging several of them to prematurely leave the system. Some were labeled as *slow learners* and prevented from participating in regular school activities, while others were mainstreamed and showcased as *slow learners* for their classmates. Still others were placed in nonessential classes for superficial credits, such as "Football", and others were advised to "go to work" given the reason that school was a "waste of time" for the type of jobs they were identified as being able to secure. Regardless of their decisions to stay or not, none of the study participants acquired adequate basic skill competencies for flexibility or upward mobility. Whether the individual graduated, attained a GED, or dropped out, the lack of "book" skills have marginalized their choices.

Furthermore, all of these men were required to accept early responsibilities for the welfare of themselves and, in most case, for their families as well. Several missed school to work and others found themselves having to leave school entirely to help supplement their families' incomes. Some of their responses to these early responsibilities were acted out through school disengagement and resistance, including nonparticipation, inconsistent attendance, disruptive classroom activities, and crime. Particularly, where the father was absent, these men disclosed their feelings of lingering anger and disappointment in *missing out* on a father-son relationship, and perhaps, the possible "push" they would have received to do better in school.

Commonalties in their school cultures were also found throughout their testimonies. Each of the study participants talked about the low expectations their schools had of the students attending college, and in some cases, of students even graduating from high school. Even though they attended different schools, information about career and academic opportunities was scarce and, most did not receive any guidance concerning their future lives. In general, colleges did not visit their schools, at least that they were aware, and discussions about future aspirations were muted among peers, teachers, the guidance personnel, as well as within their families. Only one study participant received advice about college, which he received from his mother during his senior year, not from his school.

All expressed their disappointment in the school's inability to provide them with the needed knowledge for future opportunities. On the other hand, none of the study participants *blame* the schools for their lack of achievement, instead, they *fault* themselves and feel they should have studied harder, paid better attention, and "skipped" less, and perhaps they would have their diplomas and degrees, or at the least, a better command of their basic skills.

Psychosocial and Sociocultural Influences

Collectively, their narratives tell the same story of poverty, low academic achievement, early responsibility pressures, and low parental encouragement to attain academic and economic success. Collectively, their early cultural experiences, defined as that which determines how people interpret and mentally organize their worlds, dictated their ways of thinking, attitudes, beliefs, and the manner in which they interface with education. Although their experiences varied, as did their race, they ultimately ended up in the same place, expressing similar ideas and beliefs, with similar aspirations and perceptions of opportunities. Each expressed a strong sense of agency or self-efficacy, that served to mediate their limited perceptions of opportunities.

When the study participants responded to questions pertaining to their school experiences, they expressed disappointment about the non-caring attitudes and insensitivity felt by their elementary, middle school/junior high, high school teachers, and administrators. Reasons given for resisting school and contributing to their decisions to leave school, whether mentally or physically, included the belief that teachers and other school officials were not interested in their success, that they failed to provide them with the support and encouragement needed to persevere their educations, and seemed anxious to "push them out" of the system entirely. In response to their frustrations, these study participants resisted through acts of clowning, skipping school, 'getting by," and eventually dropping out. Those that remained to graduate, just as those who left early, found themselves ill-equipped with a solid foundation in basic skills, and faced with the reality that school had failed them. From their viewpoints, if teachers had cared and felt compelled to ensure that their students learned their lessons, many of them might have stayed. But, because from their observations, teachers did not care, there was no reason to stay. "They didn't teach me nuthin!," so revealed the study participants, so why waste the time?

Sociostructural Influences on Nonparticipation

Discrimination is another factor that connects the lives and experiences of the study participants. Based on their individual testimonies, they faced academic, class, and race discrimination in

various forms, throughout their school careers. However, their perceptions differ relative to how these factors have influenced their lives, and their respective responses.

As evidenced by the testimonies of the study participants, the schools in which they attended appeared to be inadequate and lacked, in some cases, the basic materials needed to provide the students with a decent education. One study participate spoke of having to share a book with as many as 20 other students, another spoke of having to study from text books that were at least three years behind their grade level. Another recalled being tracked into a "Special C" class for handicapped and slow learning students, and never being able to move into a regular class. Throughout their testimonies are numerous examples of constraints placed on these men as young boys, that served to shape their attitudes toward school and the meaning it has for them.

The treatment some of these men received, was obviously based on class differentials, but was not usually interpreted as such, primarily because everyone around them was exposed to the same treatment. Even though many of the schools were unduly equipped with inadequate teaching materials and delinquent curricula, most of these men were blind to the discrepancies. Because these conditions were common within the context of their lives, little attention was paid to what others outside of their social milieus were receiving. Although, in most cases, they realized that people with more money lived differently, it was easy to overlook any differences when commonly sheltered from wealthier circumstances. The "class culture" of these men was simply viewed as a normal and accepted way of life.

However, some of the nonwhite participants indicated having been treated differently because of their race. Because of their contact with white schools during sports events, glimpsing white children of their same ages with different books, and, being told by their teachers of their "second-hand books," most of them were aware of the discrepancies. Thus, these participants attributed these discrepancies to race, rather than class discrimination, and accepted it as a way of life and out of their control.

Their narratives suggest that they chose to readjust their lifestyles as not to allow such constraints to interfere with their personal well-being. They each refused to view themselves as "victims" of these inequities, but as "adapters" to the circumstances. Therefore, they have been able to maintain a belief that their opportunities for success are just as boundless as anyone else's, and have assigned "blame" to themselves, rather than to their skin color or low SES. Their interpretations of structural inequalities discount any responsibility of society for their marginalized opportunities. By not blaming race or class, and maintaining a view of limitless opportunities, these men can continue to work each day with dignity an pride. As long as they feel they have the power to control the boundaries of their opportunities, as defined by them, then they can continue to strive to improve their quality of life.

Since these men were not exposed to an abundance of career and academic options, they set their goals and expectations within the parameters of their limited knowledge and experience. Even when talking with their children about the value of education, most of these men have encouraged them to complete high school, but have also encouraged them to "get a job" or "a trade." Thus, informed by their own experiences with education, they want their children to avoid educational disappointments and be better prepared than they. In their eyes, work is a sure path to success; education has not yet delivered on its promise.

Perceptions Limiting Participation

The majority of these men have internalized their shortcomings regarding their low basic skills and inability to perform successfully in school, and, thereby, blame themselves for their circumstances. By blaming themselves they remain intellectually and mentally capable of achieving academic and work success. And, if they had expended more effort, skipped less, paid attention more, and turned in more homework, their grades would have been better and they would have learned to master the basic skills, and perhaps, in some cases, graduate and attend college. Through acts of resistance and avoidance--displaying disruptive behavior, skipping classes, failing to turn in homework, and eventually dropping out--these men were able to salvage their self-respect and maintain their dignities by channeling attention away from their academic

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abilities. They refused to allow the system to dictate the way they feel about themselves, and readjusted the purpose of school for their own benefit. They found ways to mediate and respond to structures that seemed counter to their own experiences, and adjusted their responses to meet their needs and to more closely "fit" within their own experiences. The interface between the concept of agency (self-efficacy) and their perceived opportunities is a constant theme in the lives of these 13 individuals.

Contrary to their high esteem concerning their work abilities, the study participants expressed attitudes of uncertainty about their abilities to perform successfully in traditional school settings. Questions pertaining to their view of themselves as *intelligent* or *smart*, revealed that they perceive themselves as *intelligent*, but not *smart*. Smart, as described by these men, unanimously, means the "ability to make As", or high grades. Intelligence, on the other hand, refers to the capacity to learn new material, to perceive logical relationships, and to be able to use one's knowledge to solve problems and respond appropriately. They did not, however, translate intelligence into successful academic performance--making As. This way of understanding their own interaction with education, and the meaning it had for them, may explain why these men are able to maintain confidence in their ability to learn and find other avenues of learning outside the classroom that continue to affirm their abilities. Again, this sense of *agency*, the ability to maintain self-efficacy by redefining traditional meanings to more closely suit their own realities, is common among all the study participants. As long as they are learning, the classroom is insignificant.

The school system has failed them in the past, and their world experiences have not offered much hope that improved academic skills will reap any additional benefits worth the risk of participating in further schooling. Although they blame themselves for their low academic achievement, they also pride themselves for their work accomplishments. Because they have accomplished education's main goal--a job-- it is not viewed as a priority nor a must. They are working, and that is all that matters for the present moment.

Findings

The findings of this research suggest several variables which inhibit adult education participation of blue-collar male workers with low-literacy skills. Variables ranging from psychosocial, sociocultural, and sociostructural tend to work together to help develop prospective learners' orientations toward education participation. These include negative school experiences, family influences, work orientation, exposure to opportunities, and one's aspirations, which carry over from youth to adulthood, influencing school resistance/disengagement during youth and nonparticipation in education programs during adulthood (Table 1). Findings also suggest the

Youth Experiences Carried Over to Adulthood to Influence Nonparticipation

Youth Experiences		Adulthood Meanings
Negative school experiences	⇒	Nonparticipation in adult education
Low academic achievement	⇒	Low "academic-esteem"
"Hidden" opportunities	⇒	Aspirations restricted
Success redefined	⇒	High "work-esteem"

connection between "academic-esteem" and "work-esteem," as important determinants for understanding reasons for nonparticipation among this group of individuals, identifying high work achievement in adulthood, as a replacement for the low-academic achievement they experienced during their school years. Because education came to symbolize frustration and failure, and "unable to do much" for these men, they redirected their strategies for success toward the workplace. *Work*, then, became, for these men, the "measuring stick" for achieving success rather than *education*, the conventional "key" to success. And, in order to maintain self-esteem,

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pride, and dignity, encounters with formal schooling are not approached with urgency--more often than not, formal education is avoided.

The additional findings in this study suggest that sociostructural factors, including race and class differentials, particularly in regards to school, affect individuals in different ways. While all of the respondents disclosed awareness of the limitations placed on groups of people because of race and/or class, these men chose to disallow its elements to *victimize* them. Although their exposure to opportunities was limited, and often "hidden," these men adjusted their aspirations to fit within the realms of their perceived opportunities, and began striving for achievement within the walls of their realities. Their interpretation of these opportunities are directly linked to their perception of education, and operate to influence their need for education and subsequent participation. In other words, individuals make decisions based on what they know, and as one participant put it, "If you don't know nuthin', you can't do nuthin'. These findings illuminate the strong sense of agency these men possess as they found ways during youth and continue to find ways as adults to mediate societal constraints. Similar to MacLeod's (1987) findings, "Aspirations provide a conceptual link between structure and agency because although they are rooted firmly in individual proclivity (agency), they also are acutely sensitive to perceived societal constraints (structure)" (p. 148).

Finally, the findings suggest that lifeworld experiences, beginning with a recollection of past experiences, cannot be separated from the individual's present day or future anticipated experiences, if full understandings are to be gleaned. Holistic approaches to understanding human behavior must be applied when trying to understand the complex lives of adults and to understand their reasons for not participating in adult education programs. Through the voices of 13 blue-collar male workers with low-literacy skills, a greater understanding of their struggles and experiences helped to disclose the meanings they attach to education and illuminate variables that influence nonparticipation in adult education programs. It is the hope of this researcher, that more consideration will be given to studying people from their perspectives, rather than from assumptive positions, so that we begin to dispel the deficit views that flow throughout adult education literature.

Implications for Practice and Research

This research has implications for understanding nonparticipation of low-literate and low-skilled working adults from their world view. It takes the socio-historical context of the person's life into account and places reasons for nonparticipation within the context of their experiences with school, its culture, family and community influences, race, gender and socioeconomic differentials, personal aspirations and their perception of the opportunity structure. More importantly, this research has implications for providing some answers about school based approaches to adult education and calls for practitioners to rethink traditional methods for reaching this growing population.

Considering the adult within the context of his/her experiences from all aspects of life, and not just from the point of adulthood, is important for understanding participation behavior. When designing and implementing programs and marketing strategies, we must have an understanding of where the adult has come from before we can truly know where he/she is going. By dialoging with the individuals who we hope to more fully understand, we can better know how they have organized their world and the meanings they attach to their experiences.

From the historical perspective, the findings suggest the importance of developing stronger aspirations in young people if we, as adult educators and researchers, want to include them in adult education programs during adult years. Aspirations, however, are developed based on one's exposure to opportunities and the subsequent information pertaining to realizing these options. These factors must be considered when assessing the needs of the eligible adult learner, because if the aspirations do not fit the goals of the classes, then to expect participation will be fruitless. This research calls attention to the importance of understanding the learning needs of prospective adult participants and the meaning learning has for these individuals.

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Using Transformative Learning Principles To Improve Training Programs For the Economically Disadvantaged

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The problem addressed by this research is the absence of indicators by which to evaluate the educational components of Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) training program proposals. Although there has been 50 years of professional experience in adult education, JTPA evaluations are not informed by this experience. The research developed a manual that will allow members of Private Industry Councils and Service Delivery Area staffs to evaluate the educational components of JTPA training program proposals.

The initial needs assessment conducted for this project led the investigator to think that there were training programs being conducted within the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) system that led to the development of transformative learning and perspective transformations for the participants. Furthermore, it was the personal bias of the investigator that training programs resulting in transformative learning and perspective transformations were desirable for the JTPA population.

Purpose of Study

The research developed a manual that will allow members of Private Industry Councils (PICs) and Service Delivery Area (SDA) staffs to evaluate the educational components of JTPA training program proposals. The manual provides them with the information needed to be capable of recognizing transformative learning principles and practices as they evaluate training proposals. To accomplish this the investigator conducted a study that researched theory and best practices and collected adult education examples of transformative learning principles in use in the JTPA system. The study also included data collected from JTPA program participants and administrators. The findings of the study were then used to develop the manual. The manual was created as a product that is an integration of both theory and practice in the field. It is also a product of a needs assessment conducted with administrators and participants in the JTPA training system.

The manual is informed by a review of the relevant literature in adult education, job training and the JTPA environment. It is also informed by a survey of best practices in the JTPA environment and a needs assessment conducted with JTPA training program participants, administrators and providers.

Rationale and Significance

To successfully serve its intended population, the JTPA system must deliver much more effective training programs. When the education adults participate in is based on sound adult education practices, the chances of it being significant and meaningful to them is much better (Knowles, 1980).

Eighty percent of the people entering the workforce in the year 2000 will be in what are known as the minorities classifications. They will also be from a group of people that are likely to have multiple barriers to employment. The task of the JTPA System will become more and more difficult. As it does there will be a greater need for a means to evaluate training proposals for their adult education value and efficacy. Mere placement in a job will

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not be a good enough indicator. The nature of the jobs JTPA participants will assume will require them to make numerous shifts in their perspectives. The jobs will require training and retraining as systems and organizations change.

The job holders of the 21st century will have to be lifelong transformative learners. Employing adult education and transformative learning principles to the training for these individuals should be a priority. Basic learning and adaptability to change is a prerequisite to gain access to and satisfactorily perform on even entry-level jobs (Levitan and Gallo, 1988). The system should prepare participants to function effectively in the available jobs. Those jobs will be increasingly more complex and require higher ordered skills; more so than ever before in our country's history (Carnevale et al., 1990).

The overwhelming majority of the programs now funded in the JTPA system will not be up to that challenge. The system has already been assessed by many as falling short of its purpose (Bovard, 1990). The JTPA incentives for the SDAs and those conducting the programs focus only on job placement.

Improved training programs could be developed and funded as a result of PICs using the manual developed for this project. If the training is fundamentally sound and well grounded in adult transformative learning principles the participants will be much better prepared to assume meaningful and lasting jobs in society.

One way to meet the new challenges faced by the JTPA system is to develop training programs grounded in transformative adult education principles. The only way to know the funded programs are grounded in those principles is to have a means of helping JTPA volunteers and staff evaluate the program proposals. They must make that evaluation based on the adult education value and efficacy of proposed programs coming before them for funding.

The manual developed for this project will be one small part of the answer to the problems outlined. It will be a first step in the process needed to bring about changes in the system. These changes are needed to make it more probable that the programs will more fully meet the needs of the JTPA participants.

Literature Review

This study was concerned with the development of a manual to be used to evaluate the educational components of proposals for JTPA training programs and those training programs involve the training of adults. Since this is the case, it was important to review literature related to the adult educational theory, philosophy, principles and practices, and research. It was also deemed important by the investigator to consider the literature concerning transformative learning. At the time this study began, it was apparent that no consideration had been given to the use of transformative learning principles in the formulation of any existing guidelines, for evaluating JTPA training program proposals.

This research has drawn on the literature in several areas of adult learning, development and transitions. The primary focus of the literature search has been on perspective transformation and transformative learning theory, job training, the practice and philosophy of facilitating adult learning and education, evaluation of adult education program proposals, qualitative research methods, and development of manuals, guides and reference materials. The research is grounded in the theory of how adults, especially economically disadvantaged adults, learn and how they make the transitions in their lives that allow them to transcend the limitations put on them by societal factors.

Qualitative Research Methods

The development of the manual for this research project depended on qualitative research techniques and the data collected through those techniques. Critical incidents, interviews and

questionnaires were administered to participants, administrators and officials in the JTPA system. The data collected from these instruments, in part, determined the need for and content of the manual. There was also a questionnaire administered to evaluate the structure and content of the manual after it was developed. In this way qualitative research determined the outcome of this project.

Methodological Stages

The development, publication and evaluation of the manual resulting from this study followed several stages and steps in the process of completing the final product.

Literature Review

- Comprehensive literature review of adult education theory and practice, qualitative research methods, job training and the JTPA environments, and the development of manuals.
- Data collection and qualitative research methods determined from the literature on qualitative research methods.

Needs Assessment

- Needs assessment conducted in the New Jersey JTPA environment, including data collected from training program participants, administrators and providers.
- Administered critical incidents, interviews and questionnaires to participants, administrators, officials and providers in the New Jersey JTPA system.
- Determined the need for and content of the manual using analysis of the data collected in interviews, critical incidents and preference inventories.
- Survey of best practices for training program design and program proposal evaluation in the New Jersey JTPA environment.

Field Testing

- Field tests were conducted for the instruments used in the collection of data.
- Field tests were conducted to assess the first drafts of the manual after it was developed.

Evaluation

- Questionnaire administered to collect data for the evaluation of the content and structure of the manual after it was developed.
- Manual revised based on analysis of the evaluation data.

Needs Assessment Stage

To accomplish the objectives of the needs assessment phase of the project, over 70 critical incidents were distributed to individuals in three SDAs in the state of New Jersey. A total of 51 subjects completed and returned critical incidents for the data collection effort.

There were also 20 interviews conducted; 13 of those being with program administrators, JTPA officials, adult educators and training program vendors, and 7 of them with former participants in JTPA funded training programs.

The subjects for the interviews were selected based on them being a representative sample of the participant and administrator/provider perspectives in the New Jersey JTPA environment and their accessibility to this researcher. The vendors/providers were selected because they came from a variety of organizations doing business in the JTPA system and represented a horizontal slice of the types of services provided in the system. They were conducting programs that had outstanding reputations as well as those that had programs that were judged adequate but not outstanding. The administrators, officials and adult educators were selected based on their experience in and broad knowledge of the New Jersey JTPA system. The program participants were selected from programs that had been identified in a survey conducted to determine best practices in the New Jersey JTPA system.

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The initial needs assessment conducted through informal inquiries with some individuals involved in the JTPA system, along with the literature review conducted early in this study, gave the investigator a basis for formulating the critical incidents and interview schedules. The first drafts of the critical incidents were developed from questions strongly suggested by the initial literature review. That literature suggested some of the areas of concern if the study was to discover the elements in training programs that would support a transformative learning environment.

Based on the writings of many of the authors and researchers in adult education and specifically in perspective transformation, the investigator was able to formulate what seemed to be the key issues involved in programs fostering major changes in participants' perspectives or frames of reference. Some initial conversations with program participants also provided issues to be the subject of the inquiry. The objective became one of determining how actual participants in JTPA programs would articulate the thoughts, feelings and meanings of training experiences that provided them with a perspective transformation or shift in how they regard themselves and their roles in society. The investigator focused on formulating a series of situational inquiries and questions to which participants and others could respond. To do that the respondents had to indicate the most pertinent factors that made a difference for them in the training experiences.

The investigator was able to formulate those initial instruments and refine them through the field tests. These instruments provided the data that were used to define the factors needed in training programs to foster transformative learning environments. The factors were then formulated into criteria to be used to evaluate training program proposals for inclusion of transformative learning principles in their design.

People who had been participants in previous JTPA training programs were identified to participate in the field testing and data collection phases of the needs assessment. The investigator found participants in programs that produced graduates who entered employment and retained their jobs for extended periods of two or more years (generally these programs are regarded as exemplary). The investigator also found participants in programs that are more typical of the programs being conducted. These programs often produce graduates who hold jobs only on a temporary basis. This was done to get a view of the total spectrum of programs being conducted in the JTPA system.

Summary of Needs Assessment Findings

The collection of 51 critical incident responses and 20 interviews provided a large enough data base to be able to generalize and formulate patterns of the essential needs assessment elements.

A total of 29 themes were identified in the data. The 29 themes were organized into 7 categories or mega-themes. These categories were then used to outline the topics to be covered in the manual as features of training programs to look for in the proposals. These categories were:

- Learner Autonomy
- Outcomes
- Instructional Staff Qualities
- Resources
- Instructional Methods
- Environment
- Timing, Organization of Topics

The categories were also used to organize the other parts of the manual. They were combined with the findings of the literature search to formulate the sections of the manual that discussed the topics of:

- Adult Education Theory
- Principles of Adult Learning

- Adult Student Characteristics
- How Adults Learn
- Instructor/Facilitator Characteristics

Information Needed to Design Materials

The objective of this research was to develop a manual that incorporated these kinds of indicators in the training program proposal process. To establish this kind of manual it was necessary to collect data on what indicators could be used to assure a difference for participants in these proposed training programs.

To develop guidelines for evaluating the training program proposals, qualitative research methods were used to define those guidelines. The guidelines were developed from an understanding of how adults learn, how they view the world in which they live, and what is needed to support the process of transforming the participants frame of reference. Understanding these elements was necessary because these were the elements that came out of the initial literature review and needs assessment.

The economically disadvantaged adults that are participants in JTPA funded training programs have a perception of the world that differs radically from that of someone not facing the barriers to employment they see in their lives. If they are to overcome those barriers they must undergo a perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1990, 1991; Finger, 1989). In order for the investigator to understand the participants frame of reference it was necessary to gain an appreciation of how they view the world and the barriers. The reality of those participants is ever changing and fostering knowledge of how to cope or deal with those changes has to be the objective of the training they receive. Understanding the meaning of their experiences and the process of perspective transformation they must undergo is essential to making a lasting impact on their situations.

Needs Assessment Instruments

Based on the review of the literature, the investigator determined the training JTPA participants receive must present them with the opportunity to undergo transformations of their frame of reference. It is impossible to gain any insight into their frame of reference if their words and descriptions are not the key and essential elements in the inquiry (Brookfield, 1987). Interviews and critical incidents are ways to collect the data necessary to gain that insight.

In order to present a point of departure and to give the participants in the interviews a focus for reflecting on their experience, it was necessary to develop and administer a set of critical incidents. These critical incidents helped the subjects and the interviewer spend their time most efficiently in deriving the needed data.

The objective in the inquiry was to determine those characteristics in training programs that seemed to make them more meaningful for participants and included principles of transformative learning. The purpose was to define the factors that make it easier to acquire meaningful life skills in training programs that lead to perspective transformations. According to Mezirow (1991) transforming perspectives involves our sense of self and is a process of becoming critically aware of our assumptions and how they might constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world. This often facilitates making choices or makes it possible to otherwise act upon these new understandings.

The investigator recognizes the inability of the critical incident technique to assure that the written instructions elicited all the critical elements of training program performance. Because of this, another element was added to the construction of the critical incidents' instructions. Forced choice as well as open choice items were presented to the respondents

for indicating their responses. In this section of the critical incidents they were asked to indicate their preference for or rating of certain elements in training programs. This "preference inventory" provided an additional source of data for formulating the manual contents. It was incorporated in the items in the critical incidents.

Separate critical incidents instruments were developed for use by former JTPA program participants and for administrators, officials and vendors.

In order to pretest the critical incidents and the preference inventories the investigator sent out five copies of each of these instruments. They were sent to five individuals representative of the subject respondents in the research study. A total of ten individuals were involved in this part of the pretest, five for the critical incidents for program participants and five different individuals for the other critical incidents.

It was determined that completed critical incidents had to be received from 30 subjects. The critical factors or elements were determined based on an analysis of 20 interviews and 51 completed critical incident responses.

Critical incident responses were collected from 51 respondents. These respondents included JTPA training program participants and providers of training as well as some administrators in the JTPA system. Twenty interviews were conducted within this same population of subjects to determine the elements of training programs that could help participants make perspective transformations.

Interviews, surveys and preference inventories were used again after the manual was developed. At that point they were used to elicit comments and evaluative data on the usefulness and ability of the manual to meet its stated purpose.

The intention of using critical incidents in the research was to determine those conditions that make a difference between success and failure or an unfavorable outcome in a given situation according to the respondent's perception of the situation. This technique was used in this study to get the subjects (program officials/professionals and former program participants) to recall and describe the feelings, thoughts, actions, behaviors or other elements that made the difference between programs being successful or not being successful for the participants.

Typical of the comments made by the respondents to the critical incidents were the following:

Resources

I seen how much the instructor was showing us and all the equipment that was available. I felt like they were really trying to help us learn more about how we can do good in our jobs.

The book was not really that good. I was bored reading some of the stuff.

The new stuff they were using to teach us was really helpful.

Empathy/No Empathy

I was sure the teacher was trying to help me and was aware of my situation.

What made a difference for me was the way the leader showed that she could see my point and was trying to help me.

I really felt like I was with family or something, they tried to make me feel comfortable.

Learner Autonomy

I could see where this was going to help me when I got a job. I didn't see that all the time, sometimes it took awhile for me to see.

I was starting to feel better about myself. All those other times I was in a job I didn't think I could make it because I was not smart enough.

Missus C... was so kind and caring she always made me feel good even when I cried cause I didn't think I could make it. Remembering all those keys when I couldn't see them was hard but she helped.

I had to do good because Ms. G... was counting on me I know. She let us know she was there to help us, that makes you feel good.

Instructional Methods

I knew I had to work with a group and that wasn't easy because I was usually able to work on my own and keep to myself.

The instructor kept making us come up with ideas as a team he wouldn't let us do it alone.

Comments like these were coded and subsequently used to determine the broader categories or themes that seemed to emerge from the responses to the critical incidents and interviews.

The analysis did not impose a predetermined coding structure on the data. The analysis consisted of initially coding the responses according to their frequency of occurrence and the common themes that seemed to be emerging. A set of descriptive terms that emerged as the responses were analyzed and used to determine the various themes that seemed to emerge from the data. A total of 29 significant themes were identified in the data. These themes were identified by determining which ones were evident four or more times in the responses. The investigator thought any theme that was evident in four or more instances was a good indicator of an item or issue to be addressed in the manual.

The 29 themes were grouped by commonality in terms of the adult education and training issues or ideas they seemed to be addressing. The 29 themes were then organized into 7 broader categories or mega-themes. Since the mega-themes were based in the adult education and training arena it was deemed logical that these would be sections or topics to be addressed in the manual. The categories were then used to outline the topics to be covered in the manual as features of training programs to look for in the proposals.

Limitations of the Study

The manual has been designed, developed, field tested and evaluated. The setting for this has been the JTPA environment represented by three PICs selected from the SDAs in the state of New Jersey.

The manual is not expected to transform the users into accomplished program proposal evaluators. It is intended only to provide information that will enable users to recognize and apply transformative learning principles and practices in the proposal evaluation process. To transform the users into accomplished program proposal evaluators would require training and time to practice the skills of proposal evaluation. Nor is it expected to completely reform the JTPA system evaluation processes. Rather, the use of this manual could contribute to improving the effectiveness of the proposal evaluation process within the JTPA system.

The manual will provide a first step in the process of improving the JTPA training program proposal evaluation system, even though it may be just a small step. The major part of the improvement will come when the programs are conducted using adult education principles as the guiding philosophy. However, the overall evaluation and improvement of the program implementation is beyond the scope of this project.

Evaluation of the impact of using the manual, developed for this project is also beyond the scope of the original project. It is hoped that others will take up the challenge of conducting further research study in this area. Evaluating the effectiveness of the manual in actual use in the proposal evaluation process would require a separate project. It could only be done after the manual is in use for some time.

The guidelines were developed for training program proposals in a generic sense. It is possible that training programs of a specific nature or type may not adhere to the findings of this study.

Nevertheless, the investigator does think the guidelines published in the manual are useful and can improve the proposal evaluation process. Users of the manual should approach it as transformative learners and critical thinkers and challenge and validate the

assumptions undergirding the manual's development. Not to do so would violate the principles upon which the guidelines have been developed.

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Supporting the Career Development of Older Employees: an HRD Point of View

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In 1995 a quantitative exploratory survey into educational conditions promoting the career development of older workers was carried out in a multinational chemical corporation. Educational conditions are defined as demands made on the corporate HRD-policy, HRD-activities and employees' willingness to learn, as well as stimulating factors that promote the career development of older workers. Although the corporation is willing to perform an age-aware personnel policy, results indicate that this still concentrates more on younger employees, that participants in the career development process are insufficiently stimulating in their role and that the traditionally formal HRD-activities have little effect on the career development of older workers. This paper describes the survey, highlights its major results and offers possible recommendations to improve the existing situation.

Many organizations are confronted with an ageing workforce. This development may cause a problem since older employees are often viewed as less mobile and flexible and therefore less able to deal with rapid changes occurring in many organizations. The mobility of older employees in organizations is therefore an actual theme in personnel management in the Netherlands (Alaerds, 1994; Van der Heijden, 1995). One solution to this problem might be to increase the educational efforts specifically aimed at older employees. However, research has shown that most training activities are directed at young 'high potentials' rather than older employees. One reason for this is the unfounded stereotyping regarding older employees: since they are considered in advance to be inflexible and not motivated towards change, training is not considered an appropriate tool for updating their qualifications (Boerlijst, 1993). Furthermore, there is little investment in training older employees as employers doubt whether this investment will "pay off". According to some authors (Boer-lijst, 1993; Van der Kloet, 1994), this may be the key reason for older people not functioning optimally.

One of the questions frequently posed in articles on mobility is: how can human resources developers positively contribute to mobility problems (Van der Zee, 1995)? This paper addresses possible answers in response to the career development problems of older workers from an HRD point of view.

Mobility is, in essence, a career planning and -management question (Boerlijst, 1993; Paffen, 1991). The growing interest in mobility is created by at least four developments. The first development has been already touched upon. Many organizations have to deal with an ageing work force and thus feel the need to come up with policies that take this factor into account. Another development is that organizational structures have become 'flatter'. Whereas in the past bigger always meant better and organizational growth was a major goal of companies, nowadays there is a trend towards smaller, leaner and less hierarchical organizations (Daft, 1992). As a result, there are less possibilities for logical vertical career moves. A third trend is that working contracts are more flexible. Lifelong employment will be the exception for personnel of all ages: corporations have a fixed core staff and during busy times personnel are only hired temporarily. It is important to keep in-company staff flexible and open-minded so they can easily be switched among employers. A fourth trend is the growing responsibility of employees for their own career development. In the past employees became more or less 'passive' regarding their career the moment they entered an organization. Employers were responsible for the planning of careers and gave employees little control over their own progress through a company, preferring to place and promote without consultation (Beer, 1984). Under the current uncertain economic conditions this attitude no longer

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suffices. Employees are expected to be self-supporting and to plan their own careers, a responsibility switch which is especially new to older employees.

Many organizations, confronted with these trends, are looking for solutions. Given the fact that it is *people* within organizations who sell and market, develop and create products, take decisions and implement programmes, human resources are vital to an organization's succes (Caligiuri & Stroh, 1995) and should be monitored carefully. Not having the right skilled people when they are needed might seriously undermine the success of strategic business choices.

One of the appropriate tools frequently mentioned in career management literature for keeping staff updated and ready for change is Training and Development. However, this theoretical statement has been insufficiently translated into practical conditions and implications. For this reason, a *quantitative exploratory survey* was undertaken in a large multinational, multi-sited chemical corporation in 1995. The purpose of this research was to gain a full picture of the problems and educational needs of ageing workers in order to optimize educational strategies and career policies.

Starting point for the research was (Rhebergen, 1995): *what educational conditions support the career development of older employees*? This paper addresses (1) the theoretical framework used, (2) the research design, (3) the major results, (4) the conclusion and discussion of the contribution HRD-specialists could make regarding the career development of older workers.

Theoretical framework

In order to solve the problems of an ageing work force, an age-aware approach is essential to meet the mobility needs of older employees. In this paper an age-aware personnel management is defined as preventative policies aimed at keeping people healthy and productive for as long as possible (Rhebergen, 1995). The word preventative is of special importance: if organizations succeed in taking appropriate steps from the outset of people's careers, reactive curative policies at an advanced age are superfluous. With age-aware personnel management, human resources management and development activities apply to all employees regardless of age, though they make allowances for special needs at different age and career stages. The boundary between 'old' and 'young' is arbitrary because of the different ages mentioned in the literature. No curative policy is required if preventive action has been taken. So, the boundary needs to be at a relatively young age. For this research, every employee 35 years and older was defined as an older worker.

Career development is a sub-discipline of age-aware personnel management. The term 'career' is defined here as an individually perceived sequence of attitudes and behaviours towards work experiences and activities over the span of a person's life (Hall & Goodale, 1986). Typically, the term connotes upward mobility and aspiration. From this perspective, career management is not thought of as being important for people who make career moves in a horizontal direction. Under the current flatter structures, a broader concept of a career seems to be under discussion. Career development nowadays means development in both a vertical and horizontal direction (Paffen, 1991). Individual careers evolve from an interaction between the competencies and career goals an individual brings to the organization and the work experiences and possibilities the organization provides (Beer, 1984). Effective human resource flow policies and practices must allow a continuous process of matching individual career needs and organizational requirements. This statement underlines the importance of personal career planning and management. Personal career planning is a process which the person, and not the organization, manages. To do this, employees need an insight into their own knowledge, skills, expectations and possibilities. The organization's role in this is to coach, advise and provide learning activities for self-inquiry. It is generally accepted that the more control individuals have over their career choices, the more likely they will choose a career path fitting their core competencies and values, thereby ensuring satisfaction and growth (Beer, 1984). The major goal then is to plan careers which embody new tasks and learning activities and which, regardless of the career direction (vertical or horizontal), guarantee personal learning.

However, learning activities have to meet certain conditions to be constructive in career development. A literature review was done to find out what these might be. This revealed the importance of three groups of conditions, namely those related to policy, HRD-activities and to the individual worker. Figure 1 shows an overview of the found conditions in relevant literature. These conditions

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don't guarantee career development, but should be seen as facilitating career development. They function as a theoretical basis for developing research instruments.

Figure 1. An overview of educational conditions (Rheebergen, 1995)

Policy conditions	Conditions related to HRD-activities	Conditions related to individual workers
• awareness of older workers' problems • providing resources • strategically embedded measures • inspiring line managers' role • open communication • adapted rewarding resources	• creating an appropriate learning climate • paying attention to individual learning needs • paying attention to personal career planning • an age-aware instructional method • paying attention to the (re)training of line managers in their coaching role	• a learning attitude • critical reflection/self assessment • entrepreneurship towards own career • creativity

In short, the policy conditions imply that age-aware personnel management starts with a strong *awareness* that the way older workers have been treated in the past creates flexibility problems within organizations (Boerlijst, 1993). Next, organizations have to provide material and immaterial *resources* to improve this situation. Measures have to *fit the strategic choices* made (Hall & Goodale, 1986). Since human resources management within organizations is largely the line managers' responsibility, they need to fulfil an *inspiring role* towards older workers. The internal corporate career policy has to be *communicated openly* so that people can anticipate the requirements (Paffen, 1991). An additional but not necessarily condition is an *adapted reward system*, including both material and immaterial rewards, like recognizing older workers' development.

HRD activities are broadly defined as including all structured learning activities like training, or courses as well as learning-on-the-job. A first condition related to HRD activities is the creating of an *appropriate learning climate* in which people are challenged to learn continually (Begeer, 1990). An appropriate learning culture pays *attention to the individual educational needs* of employees because every individual is unique (Hall & Goodale, 1986). Next, employers should give their employees insight into the *process of personal career planning* (Boerlijst, 1993; Paffen, 1991). The shift towards personal career management is only possible if employees are equipped with the appropriate knowledge of this topic. HRD activities must be designed in accordance with *age-aware instructional principles* like the giving of constructive feedback and an adapted social and logistic learning context (Thijssen & Prevoo, 1994). Finally, *line managers have to be (re)trained* in their coaching and inspirational role. Conditions at the individual level relate to the *learning attitude* of older people (Boerlijst, 1993; Hall & Goodale, 1986). A "good" learning attitude is characterized by the *willingness to learn*, a healthy *critical view* on people's own possibilities, an entrepreneurial attitude towards one's career and the ability to *view* changes creatively as a "chance" and not as a "threat".

Research questions

Most of the problems regarding career management are dealt with from an expert or specialist perspective. Little research, however, is done into gaining an insight into workers' perceptions. This type of research will add to current career management theories so that these perceptions are examined. Also, daily practices in multinationals concerning education and career development pass via stakeholders and participants in the career development process, so that their role has to be examined too.

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Thus the main research question is:

'What educational conditions influence HRD activities which support the career development of older workers and what is the role of the line-manager, employee and personnel management specialists (the career specialist and the HRD specialist) in this process?'

This main question is divided in the following research questions:

1. to what extent is HRD policy perceived as directed at older employees?
2. to what extent do older workers perceive their line manager, personnel and career development specialist as being stimulating with regard to HRD activities and career development, and to what extent are they themselves mentally alert and willing to learn?
3. in the opinion of older workers, which HRD activities contribute to career development and to what extent are the careers of older employees currently being developed?

The last subquestion provides an insight into the functioning of HRD specialists and the quality of their advice.

Research design

An exploratory survey was chosen because of the 'how' type research question. To answer the research question a questionaire was developed and personnaly delivered to members of the target research group. In total 312 middle level employees received a questionnaire. Of these, 225 completed the questionnaire; a response rate of 72%.

The questionaire consisted of items related to six groups of variables: existing HRD policy, the role of line-managers, employees, the personnel department (as an 'umbrella' for mobility and HRD), career development specialists and HRD activities. The questionaire was developed in three phases to ensure validity and reliability.

The statistical analysis began by investigating the non-response group. This analysis showed that non-response rates between sites were comparable; no systematic deviations were found. With regard to the average age of the response and non-response group, the analysis showed that it was the more older workers who refused to cooperate. Nevertheless, the differences between the groups were very small (the response group was only 1.1 year younger on average than the population). We therefore concluded that the nature of the non-response had no serious consequences on interpretating the results.

The second step consisted of analysing the six groups of variables. A frequency analysis was performed by comparing the criterion for a sufficient condition, 60% agree, with actual scores. Then, a ANOVA-analysis was carried out to see whether there were differences between different sub-groups. For example, were there differences in perception between relatively younger and older employees. Finally, regression-analysis was carried out to search for relations between variables. The results of these last two steps are not shown in this paper because they are of particular in-company value.

Results

Only the general trends are high-lighted as it would go far beyond the purpose of this article to describe all the results in detail. A selection has been made of the major results and represented in tables.

Concerning the first research question of whether policy is directed to older workers, examination of *policy* conditions revealed that the flexibility problems of older workers are recognized in policy statements. An explicit, strategic item in the company studied was improving the working climate for older workers. However, according to the results, this written commitment has not resulted in taking real improvement action, so we can conclude that the management is still not committed optimally to the perceived problems of older workers.

Table 1. A selection of the key response rates to questions on policy

	percentage of respondents in any category			
	totally agree	partly agree	partly disagree	totally disagree
1. Personnel policy is embedded in strategic policy	6	41	35	16
2. The employer is willing to invest in HRD activities that promote career development	43	47	6	0
3. HRD policy is sensitive to age-related needs	3	21	44	29
4. The employer teaches employees the basic principles of personal career planning	2	16	30	51
5. Employees have sufficient information on career interventions	2	12	30	54

Personnel management is not embedded optimally in corporate strategy (only 47% of respondents partly or totally agree; see table 1), while strategic, age-aware choices are not yet fully communicated top-down through the organization. The greatest obstacle for an age-aware personnel management is not a financial one: older workers believe management is willing to invest in career development education (90% of respondents partly or totally agree). However, in their opinion (73%) HRD policy could be more sensitive to their needs. Although older workers participate in HRD activities, this doesn't always meet their expectations. Personal career planning receives little attention in educational policy (18% of the respondents partly or totally agree) and employees are too little informed about career interventions to anticipate adequately (14% of the respondents partly or totally agree).

With regard to the second research question, the roles of the various stakeholders and participants in the career development process, results show that line-managers are seen as the most stimulating and facilitating. Considering the fact that recent personnel management views show that human resources management tasks are delegated to line-managers, this is a positive point. Line-managers however, are not optimally prepared and trained for their inspiring role (44% of respondents think they are; see table 2), but most managers had consulted their employees at least once in the past five years about career development and related educational needs (86% of respondents agree), although these contacts decline among older employees. In most cases, line-managers perceive personnel development at all ages as an important task (64% of respondents partly or totally agree).

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Table 2. A selection of key response rates to questions on line managers in the career development process

	percentage of respondents in any category			
	totally agree	partly agree	partly disagree	totally disagree
1. Line-managers are trained in their stimulating role	16	28	32	17
2. Line-managers perceive employee-development at all ages as a relevant task	16	48	23	12

Line managers and workers may also consult supporting specialists (personnel department and career development officers) for career advice, though these are generally perceived as not being particularly stimulating and supportive. Older workers take the view that these officers are insufficiently open and accessible to them, unwilling to give adequate advice and show special interest in their career development (see table 3). It is possible that career development effort concentrates on the younger high-potentials.

Table 3. A selection of key response rates to questions on supporting specialists in career development

	percentage of respondents in any category		
	agree	neutral	disagree
Personnel department (PD)			
1. PD is 'open' to/accessible for older workers	50	34	15
2. PD gives adequate advice	8	26	64
Career development specialists (CDS)			
1. CDS are 'open' to older workers	40	41	13
2. CDS give adequate advice	8	27	61

Most respondents see themselves as active entrepreneurs in career development and HRD activities (see table 4). For example, they are willing to learn (97% respondents partly or totally agree) and are capable of dealing with working activities outside their own narrowing defined job function (90% partly or totally agree). The flipside is that they also confirm they have inadequate knowledge about personal career management (42% respondents partly or totally agree) and are badly coached, supported and stimulated by the organization.

Table 4. A selection of the key response rates to questions on employees' career development

	percentage of respondents in any category			
	totally agree	partly agree	partly disagree	totally disagree
1. Older workers are willing to learn new knowledge and skills	64	33	2	0
2. Older workers are capable of performing activities outside their own job function	56	34	5	3
3. Older workers have adequate personal career planning knowledge	9	33	38	19

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The third research question concerns HRD activities and the extent to which careers are developed in the actual situation. To gain a picture of employees' attitude towards HRD activities, they were asked to rate the HRD activities they had attended over the last five years. Analysis showed that all employees had participated in one educational activity at least. Courses and training were the most frequent educational interventions (85% of respondents had participated in a course or training during the 1990-1995 period; see table 5).

Table 5. A selection of the key response rates to questions on HRD activities

	HRD activities over the past five years and the career development relevance	
	%	% very important
1. Courses and training	85	49
2. Job enrichment	49	71
3. Temporary detachments	7	86
4. Participation in projects	56	53

An important point is that these activities are not always effective in contributing to career development (49% of respondents agree). Learning activities related to daily work activities, like job enrichment (71% agree), temporary detachments (86% agree) and working in multidisciplinary projects (53% of respondents agree) are seen as being by far the most important in keeping older workers flexible and in developing their careers.

Taking the overall results, generally we may conclude that the conditions for career development are present. Important reasons stating this are the fact that all employees are participating in HRD activities and their positive self-esteem in remaining flexible and multifunctional. But there are aspects which need improving, especially the supporting role of the organization. These improvements are further outlined in the conclusion and discussion.

Conclusion and discussion

In this paper we have highlighted the major results of a survey into the existence of educational conditions in a multinational, multi-sited chemical corporation; the role of the stakeholders in stimulating career development and the contribution of HRD activities to the career development of older workers.

A first conclusion is that the intention to carry out an age-aware personnel *policy* are good, although daily practices do not always concur with this. Older workers feel insufficiently valued and treated in a age-aware manner. So, there is a discrepancy between "intended" and "realized" policy. Major improvements to the organizational support can be achieved. Regarding the role of various stakeholders, it would be beneficial to (re)define and make clear their specific tasks and responsibilities. *Line-managers* are perceived as being the most stimulating to career development, although they are insufficiently backed up by supporting specialists in specific situations. *Personnel officers* and *career development specialists* are held accountable for advising on career development, but according to older workers they fail in this task. It is particularly important to clearly define the position of these staff and equip them with the necessary instruments and skills to be able to coach older workers. In the current situation the additional value of personnel specialists to line managers is ambiguous. Although older *workers* are willing to learn and see themselves as capable employees, we may conclude that the organization does not succeed in tapping their full potential. Their resulting negative feelings can create frustrations. Instead the organization should apply their rich work-experience and company-specific knowledge to realizing strategic goals.

A second major conclusion concerns the organization's attitude towards HRD activities. Frequently, *HRD activities* like training and courses are seen as appropriate to meet the needs of older workers. This is a traditional attitude. It's commonsense that people attend courses now and then, regardless of the value of the course and its appropriateness to personal needs. An important lesson

for HRD specialists is that the choice of formal learning activities is not always the right one. A renewed attitude is required. Development activities like 'learning by doing', 'learning on the job' and 'individual coaching' are perceived as being far more relevant to career development. It will be a good start to make older people feel important. One possible intervention is to create functions in which older workers can transfer their knowledge and experience to younger workers before retirement. Furthermore, in the composition of (project)teams, a mix of abilities and knowledge of both older and younger staff, thus supplementing each other, needs to be addressed.

A third conclusion concerns knowledge about personal career management. Since employees' responsibility for planning their careers is increasing, employees need to be equipped with relevant knowledge about this. On the one hand this means the organization has to provide all the information for planning careers, like vacancies and opportunities for lateral moves, and on the other develop personal career planning training, in which higher-order planning and self-assessment skills are learned, which prepares employees for their new responsibility for their own career development.

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